

Chicago Proposes “Banning the Box”

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Only a few months after Illinois “banned the box” for private employers, Chicago’s city council has [proposed](#) to do the same. “Ban the box” refers to a movement that seeks to remove the check box from job applications asking whether or not the applicant has a prior criminal history. Like the Illinois law, Chicago’s proposal would defer such inquiries until after the applicant has been (i) deemed qualified for the position and (ii) notified of his or her selection for an interview. Where the employer does not conduct an interview, it would have to wait until after making a conditional offer.

The primary purpose behind the council’s proposal is to expand the coverage of the state law (which only applies to private employers with fifteen or more employees) to include all private businesses in the city of Chicago. The proposal otherwise adopts the prohibitions and exceptions set forth in the state law, and incorporates a similar penalty scheme with fines ranging from \$100 to \$1,000 for each offense.

If the council’s proposal becomes law, it will take effect on the same date as the Illinois state law, January 1, 2015. Stay tuned to see what the Windy City decides.

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